15:Chaseling M-5 (ca. 1934-1936)1957
O117 Murngin O117



684 stating his case to bystanders: 'I "pushed" these young
682 men to kill you because you took my wife; she was not promised to you, she was never yours and always belonged to me. That is why you die.'

Wife-stealing usually results in the woman being brutally beaten or speared, and whether she goes willingly with the seducer or is forcefully stolen makes no difference to her punishment. She shows no resentment, and indeed she regards lenient treatment as a slight to her charms.

848 Because of Yulengor marriage customs the question of illegitimate children does not occur. There are frequent illicit relations, but as every girl has a husband her children do not arouse comment. If an irregular union should be openly consummated, the children do not suffer permanently, for irregular births are absorbed into the horde and into relationships which they would have had if their mother had been correctly mated.

163 Women have about two children each, though some have as many as five or six and one I know has a dozen. Many children are born, but the population is not increasing, except on mission stations where medical attention is avail-
[165] able and child-welfare taught. In the bush, infant mortality is high, and long periods elapse between births. Children
862 are not weaned till they are five or six years of age, and I have seen grandmothers ten years and more after the birth of their last child successfully suckling grandchildren.

844 In child-birth Nature is allowed to take her course and no assistance is given beyond occasional pressure. If the child is born normally and quickly, it probably survives, and so does the mother, but when anything abnormal occurs there
[845] is a stillborn child and the mother is often injured in a way that prevents her from having any more children. Blood accompanying the placenta is tabu and is meticulously buried. Ordinarily the mother is walking within three or four hours of a birth, and within a day she goes hunting.